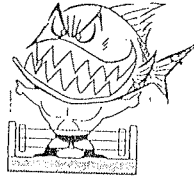


BANZAI



PRESS

Special No: 1

"Banzai Press" Special Edition

US\$5:00

ALL JAPAN WOMEN'S PRO WRESTLING

in conjunction with

Ladies Legend Pro Wrestling
JWP
Frontier Martial Arts and Wrestling

PROUDLY PRESENT

19



94

"WRESTLING QUEENDOM"

Yokohama Arena, Yokohama, Japan

Sunday 27 March, 1994 6:30pm



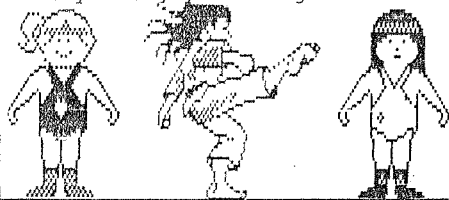
Welcome to "Wrestling Queendom"!

Sunday 27 March, 1994 sees twenty nine of the best Japanese women wrestlers, and also one from the United States, battle it out in the first of three major shows promoted by All Japan Women's Wrestling this year.

A "Dream Team" main event, five title matches, and four other special challenge bouts make up the card. Ten bouts in all. Each one promising to showcase the talents which have seen the women in this part of the world gain respect as the best in their field.

In this special edition of "Banzai Press", we have attempted to provide as much information as we can about the event, and those taking part. We can't match the glossy Japanese-language programs, packed with colour photos, which All Japan Women themselves will be producing for the occasion, but we have included information which will not be in their publication.

I am confident that readers will find this a most comprehensive guide to the 1994 "Wrestling Queendom", and hope that you enjoy reading it.



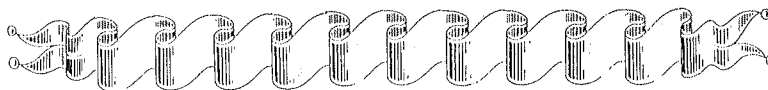
NOTE:

This special edition of "Banzai Press" was written and compiled by Frank Shanly.

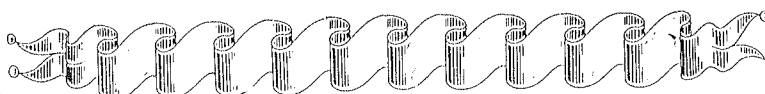
Special thanks are due to Wally Yamaguchi and Masahide Hara (of "Gong" magazine) for assistance given with translation of data.

As with all editions of "Banzai Press", "Wrestling Queendom" Special Edition can be purchased through "Maniax", Japan, or one of its associated distributors, listed elsewhere in this publication.

index



3. The Card
4. "Lore of the Ring": "Wrestling Queendom '93"
5. Introducing: Yokohama Arena
6. Special Profile: "Bull" Nakano
7. Japanese Junior Title: Okutsu V Tamada
8. Prelims: ASARI V Fukuoka & Kudo/Nakanmura V Minami/?
9. Special Profile: Akira Hokuto
10. All-Pacific Title History and Story
11. Toshiyo Yamada V Kyoko Inoue
12. Special Profile: Aja Kong
13. "Dynamite" Kansai V Sakie Hasegawa
14. Japanese Tag Team Title: Kurenai/Handa V Ito/Watanabe
15. JWP Tag Team Title: Suzuki/Ozaki V Mita/Shimoda
16. Special Profile: Shinobu Kandori
17. Toyota V Mariko
18. Hotta/Takako V Sawai/Bennett



ROLL

CALL



Chapparita ASARI
Sakie Hasegawa
Akira Hokuto
Yumiko Hotta
Kyoko Inoue
Takako Inoue
Kaoru Ito
Aja Kong
Suzuka Minami
Etsuko Mita
"Bull" Nakano
Mima Shimoda
Rie Tamada
Minami Toyota
Toshiyo Yamada
Tomoko Watanabe



Hikari Fukuoka
"Dynamite" Kansai
"Plum" Mariko
"Candy" Okutsu
Mayumi Ozaki
"Cutie" Suzuki



Miki Handa
Shinobu Kandori
Yasha Kurenai
"Eagle" Sawai



Reggie Bennett



Megumi Kudo
"Nurse" Nakanmura

"WRESTLING QUEENDOM"	
SPECIAL MAIN EVENT!	
Akira Hokuto (AJW) and Shinobu Kandori (LLPW)	Aja Kong (AJW) and "Bull" Nakano (AJW)
ALL-PACIFIC TITLE MATCH	
Champion Toshiyo Yamada (All Japan Womens)	Challenger Kyoko Inoue (All Japan Womens)
JWP TAG TEAM TITLE BOUT	
Champions "Cutie" Suzuki and Mayumi Ozaki (JWP)	Challengers Etsuko Mita and Mima Shimoda (All Japan Womens)
SPECIAL CHALLENGE BOUTS	
"Dynamite" Kansai (JWP) V Sakie Hasegawa (AJW)	Yumiko Hotta/Takako Inoue V "Eagle" Sawai/Reggie Bennett
IWA TITLE Champion Manami Toyota (AJW) V Challenger "Plum" Mariko (JWP)	JAPANESE JUNIOR TITLE Champion "Candy" Okutsu V Rie Tamada
INTER-PROMOTIONAL GROUP CHALLENGES	
"YOUNG STARS" Chapparita ASARI (AJW) V Hikari Fukuoka (JWP)	FMW V AJW Megumi Kudo & "Nurse" Nakamura V Suzuka Minami & (AJW Rookie)
JAPANESE TAG TEAM TITLE MATCH	
Champions Yasha Kurenai/Miki Handa (LLPW)	Challengers Kaoru Ito/Tomoko Watanabe (AJW)
Yokohama Arena	Sunday 27 March 1994 3:00pm

LORE OF THE RING

"WRESTLING QUEENDOM I"

Attendance: 9,600 Osaka Castle Hall, Osaka 28 November, 1993

Results:

1. Tomoko Watanabe beat Candy Okutsu (12:29)
2. Harley Saitoh beat Chikako Shiratori (2:06)
3. Chapparita ASARI beat Mitsuko Endoh (12:58) to retain the Japanese Junior Title
4. Kyoko Inoue beat Yukie Nabeno (12:27)
5. Sakie Hasegawa/Kaoru Ito beat Carol Midori/Yasha Kurenai (16:44) to retain the Japanese Tag Team Titles
6. "Bull" Nakano beat Hikari Fukuoka (13:48)
7. Aja Kong beat "Eagle" Sawai (18:01) to retain the WWWA World Title
8. "Dynamite" Kansai/"Devil" Masami/Mayumi Ozaki/"Plum" Mariko beat Akira Hokuto/Suzuka Minami/Mima Shimoda/Etsuko Mita (41:44) in an elimination tag match, with Kansai as the lone survivor
9. Yumiko Hotta/Takako Inoue beat Shinobu Kandori/Miki Handa (21:49) to retain the UWA Women's Tag Team Titles
10. Toshiyo Yamada beat Manami Toyota (30:42) to win the vacant All-Pacific Title

The Event

The second-to-last major show of All Japan Women's 25th Anniversary Year celebrations was its "Wrestling Queendom" card in Osaka Castle Hall on 28 November.

For the importance of the occasion, the turnout may have been something of a disappointment to the organisers. However, it must be remembered that 1993 had seen an unprecedented number of major women's cards, and the "specialness" of the occasions was perhaps losing some of its impact.

Nevertheless, a highly successful show resulted.

Again, the show was an "inter-promotional" company affair, with all but one (the main event) of the bouts matching the All Japan Women's wrestlers up against their rivals from the other companies.

This was a great show for the AJW girls, as they scooped seven of

the nine bouts. Only LLPW's Harley Saitoh and the JWP "Elimination Tag" team prevented the "clean sweep" of the events.

The night's main event matched up two of All Japan Women's top wrestlers in a special Title match.

Akira Hokuto had surrendered her claims to the All-Pacific Title on 25 August, seeking to make a bid (which was later aborted due to injury) for the WWWA World Title. Thus, the Title had been declared vacant, pending the result of this elimination match.

Past clashes between Manami Toyota and Toshiyo Yamada had consistently rated as "Match of the Year" candidates, and this bout proved to be no exception. It required more than thirty minutes of hard-fought action for Yamada to come out on top, and capture the "White Belt" Championship.

There were also four other title bouts on the card, all ending in

successful defences for AJW girls, over challengers from Ladies Legend Pro Wrestling.

Young AJW sensation Chapparita ASARI retained her Japanese Junior title with a win over Mitsuko Endoh.

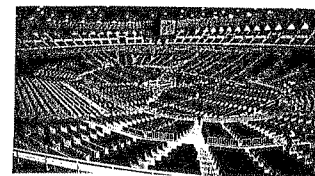
Sakie Hasegawa and Kaoru Ito had too much for Carol Midori and Yasha Kurenai, retaining the Japanese Tag Team Title. And Aja Kong successfully defended her WWWA World Title against LLPW's "number two" "Eagle" Sawai.

But in a minor upset, Shinobu Kandori and Miki Handa went down to Yumiko Hotta and Takako Inoue, when challenging for the UWA Women's Tag Team championship.

JWP were represented at this event by their "Elimination Tag" team, "Candy" Okutsu and Hikari Fukuoka, while FMW's sole representative was singles wrestler Yukie Nabeno.



INTRODUCING:



YOKOHAMA ARENA

The Yokohama Arena is one of Japan's newest and most modern sporting facilities.

Opened in April 1989, it is designed to hold a base crowd of 11,000, however, when wrestling events are held at this venue, an additional 7,000 seats can be accommodated in the "infield" area. This allows Yokohama Arena to house larger crowds than both Sumo Hall, and Budokan Hall, in Tokyo.

The Arena was first used for professional wrestling by

New Japan. On 30 September, 1990, that company promoted Antonio Inoki's "30th Anniversary Special" at this venue, drawing a sellout crowd.

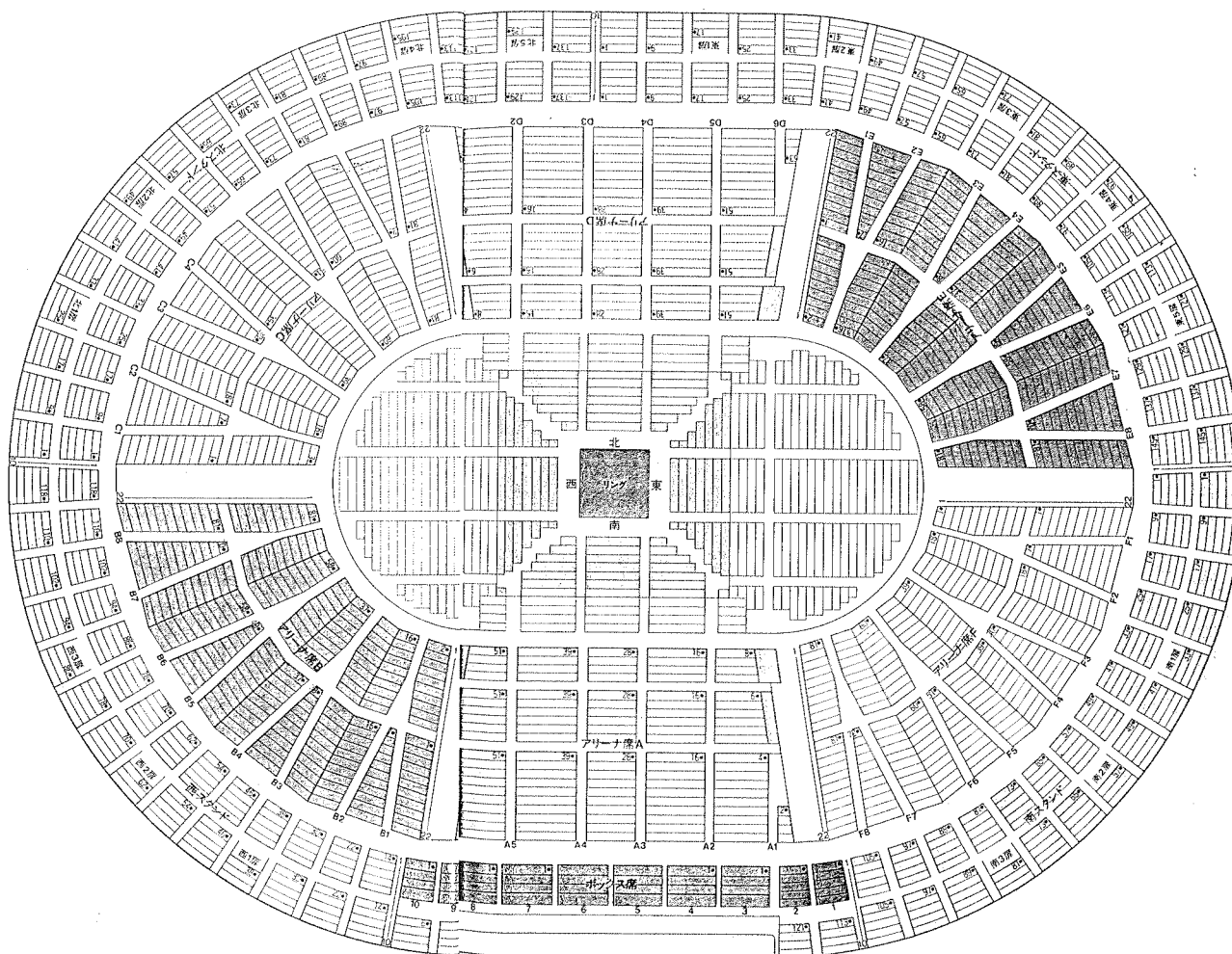
Since then, the Arena has hosted major wrestling shows on about a dozen occasions. New Japan have promoted here five times, Super World Sports twice, and RINGS and UWFI have also been here.

All Japan Women promoted the first ever women's card at this arena last year. On 2 April, 1993, "All Star Dream

Slam" drew 16,500 fans, which is the current Japanese attendance record for an all-women's card.

On that occasion, All Japan Women's had not fully used the infield seating capacity, so although this figure is slightly below maximum capacity, it was still a complete sellout of the Arena.

All Japan Women will be looking to repeat that success this year for "Wrestling Queendom".



(Photos and arena layout taken from New Japan's "G1 Climax" 1993 Special)

SPECIAL PROFILE:

"BULL" NAKANO

In the West, Keiko "Bull" Nakano would be one of the women you would least expect to be given the opportunity (much less succeed) to turn round the fortunes of a wrestling company struggling through an era of rebuilding.

A plump, two hundred pounder with hair dyed blue, and sprayed to stand on end is hardly the image of a charismatic leader that American groups, for instance, would be likely to cultivate. But over the past five years or so, "Bull" Nakano has been just that.

At a time when Japanese women's wrestling was enduring the near-simultaneous losses of its heart-throbs of the 1980s, and with its crowds dwindling as a result, All Japan Women looked for a new breed of champion. "Bull" Nakano and her "Gokumonto" group stepped into the gap left by the departed stars, and not only held the company together, but created the current "rebirth" in popularity of women's wrestling.

Whereas the previous "generation" of wrestlers appealed to the young, teenage girls of Japan, "Bull" and her gang captured the minds and hearts of the male fans, who liked the tough, hard-nosed attitude of these girls. As the stars of "Gokumonto" began to shine more brightly, the crowds once again began to flock to the women's matches.

And today, All Japan Women's is enjoying its most successful era ever.

Nakano's career to date has spanned over a decade; one of the longest of any girl wrestler in Japan. She was one of the successful applicants chosen from amongst the thousands in 1983; the era of "Jaguar" Yakota's domination of women's wrestling in the East.

Nakano began her career not far from home, in the same prefecture in fact, as one of "Dump's Girls". "Dump" Matsumoto was the leading "heavy" of the day, sporting a "punk rock"

image, and specialising in hitting her opponents over the head with her petrol can, or with chairs, tables, or anything else that was handy.

It should perhaps be noted here, that although it is "Dump" who is credited by many western writers for sparking the "Road Warrior" style, there were many girls before her, in Japan, who used this image.

With this group, Nakano achieved early success, and even held the WWWA World Tag Team Titles with Matsumoto. In the mid-1980s though, with Matsumoto nearing the end of her career, Nakano decided to

the new champion.

And it was the retirement of Nagayo's partner shortly thereafter, which left the door to the World Crown open. Nakano had dropped the All-Pacific Crown, but her eyes were now set on the larger prize.

In January 1990, it was again Nishiwaki who tasted defeat in a title tournament decider, as Nakano stormed her way into the history books.

Nakano's domination of the women's scene over the next few years was resounding. Only Aja Kong, her partner here at "Wrestling Queendom", could seriously rival her. And indeed, it was Kong who brought Nakano's reign as WWWA "Queen" to an end.

But "Bull's" career charges on, showing no signs of faltering. She has put aside her rivalry with Aja, and the two have been teaming successfully in recent months.

In this event, they are united against old foes. And appear set to remain so for the duration of the year. But with the Tokyo Dome spectacular looming, and the knowledge that she cannot continue wrestling forever, will Nakano seek one last reign as Champion?

Or will she be content to devote the remainder of her career to helping develop the new talent which continues to rise through the ranks of Japanese wrestling?

"Bull" has indicated a wish to square off against LLPW "Queen" Shinobu Kandori following her success against Hokuto last year. Here, at "Wrestling Queendom", the two will meet, on opposite sides in a tag team clash. Perhaps such a rivalry, against a fresh opponent, will help inspire Nakano's career to new heights.

Already, "Bull" has cemented her spot in history as one of the great WWWA World Champions. But there are still new challenges for her to face, before she makes her final stand.

"BULL" NAKANO

BORN: 8 Jan 1968
HOMETOWN: Kawaguchi, Saitama
HEIGHT: 170 cm/5' 8"
WEIGHT: 90 kg/198 lbs
DEBUTED: 23 Sep 1983
Toda Sports Centre, Saitama

GROUPS: 1983- AJW

TITLES HELD: WWWA World
WWWA World Tag Team
All-Pacific
CMLL Women's
Japanese
Japanese Junior

PAST SPORTS: Judo, swimming

FAVOURITE Guillotine leg
MOVE/HOLD: drop

step out of the shadow of her mentor.

The two had some of the bloodiest battles seen in the women's rings during that time. And when the smoke cleared, the youngster had established herself as a top contender for future honours.

But it was not to be until 1989 that "Bull's" star began to really shine. The retirement of "Crush Gal" Chigusa Nagayo left the All-Pacific Title (the number two in All Japan Women's) vacant. And it was Nakano who upended Mitsuko Nishiwaki in June of that year, to become

JAPANESE JUNIOR TITLE

OKUTSU V TAMADA

"CANDY" OKUTSU

BORN: 16 Jan 1975
HOMETOWN: Hiroshima
HEIGHT: 156 cm/5' 2"
WEIGHT: 57 kg/125 lbs
DEBUTED: 4 Aug 1992
Katsushikaku, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1992- JWP

TITLES HELD: Japanese Junior

PAST SPORTS: Skiing

FAVOURITE MOVE HOLD: Rolling german suplex

JWP's Japanese Junior Champion, "Candy" Okutsu, has been left in limbo in recent months. Knowing that she was to defend her title at "Wrestling Queendom" was fine, but not knowing who she would face until only days before the event, can't have amused her too much.

Okutsu was scheduled to face the winner of All Japan Women's "Rookies' League" tournament, held during their "Perfect Burning '94" series. The final of this was set to take place on 21 January, six days before "Queendom".

And it soon became clear that it would be impossible to predict the event winner, until the very last moment. Hit by forfeitures and withdrawals, the event became little more than a lottery.

The situation was further confused, when preliminary round winner Kumiko Maekawa gave up her place in the final. This left second placed Rie Tamada to face third placed Chikako Shiratori to decide the winner.

Not taking anything away from Tamada's win, as it was a tremendous milestone, so early in her career, to achieve. But

it can hardly be described as the ideal platform from which to tackle Japan's 1993 girl "Rookie of the Year".

Tamada has shown the ability to cause a boilover, but Okutsu looks to have quite a firm grip on this Title, and on the match itself.

Okutsu has been one of the great "finds" for JWP. Coming into wrestling with no special background in combat sports, and a real lightweight, few would have marked her down as "the one most likely to succeed".

But that, she certainly has done. After just over a year in the ring, she took the Japanese Junior Championship at "St Final", last December, and she has looked most impressive in defences since that time.

Tamada, is still in her first six months of wrestling, having only debuted at the beginning of the year. Certainly, she is showing remarkable potential, but the odds are too heavily stacked against her here.

"Combat Sports" Newsletter

2-monthly run-down of pro wrestling and roller derby news

Also operates a host of other related operations

Write to:

Mike O'Hara,
P.O.Box 651,
Gracie Station,
NY 10028-0006,
U.S.A.

RIE TAMADA

BORN: 10 Mar 1973
HOMETOWN: Tokyo
HEIGHT: 160 cm/5' 4"
WEIGHT: 55 kg/121 lbs
DEBUTED: 3 Jan 1994
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1994- AJW

TITLES HELD:

PAST SPORTS:

FAVOURITE MOVE/HOLD:

All Japan Women's "Rookies' League" Tournament

NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	Pt
1. Kumiko Maekawa	X	W	W	WF	W	WF	5
2. Rie Tamada	L	X	W	WF	W	WF	4
3. Chikako Shiratori	L	L	X	WF	W	WF	3
4. Akiko Abe	LF	LF	LF	X	W	WF	2
5. Miki Yokoe	L	L	L	L	X	WF	1
6. Yuka Shina	LF	LF	LF	LF	LF	X	0

GRAND FINAL: Rie Tamada beat Chikako Shiratori

MEGUMI KUDO

BORN: 20 Sep 1969
HOMETOWN: Koshigaya, Saitama
HEIGHT: 162 cm/5' 5"
WEIGHT: 62 kg/136 lbs
DEBUTED: 8 Aug 1986
Higashimunaya, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1986-1988 AJW
1990- FMW

TITLES HELD: WWA Women's
IWWA Women's

PAST SPORTS: Basketball

FAVOURITE Double wrist
MOVE/HOLD: armsault

"NURSE" NAKAMURA

BORN: 1 Feb 1974
HOMETOWN: Osaka City, Osaka
HEIGHT: 160 cm/5' 4"
WEIGHT: 62 kg/136 lbs
DEBUTED: 22 Dec 1990
Hyogo, Ehime

GROUPS: 1990- FMW

TITLES HELD:

PAST SPORTS: Amateur wrestling

FAVOURITE Jumping knee pat
MOVE/HOLD:

SPECIAL
CHALLENGE:
FMW V AJW

Suzuka Minami may have one of the best tag team records of any woman wrestler, but she will need to bring every bit of her skill and experience into the ring at "Wrestling Queendom".

She will be matched with an "as-yet-unnamed" partner, (in all probability, one of AJW's young rookies) against the tried-and-true FMW duo of Megumi Kudo and "Nurse" Rie Nakanmura. Kudo and Nakanmura have done very well representing FMW in past inter-promotional group matches, and will certainly take some beating here.

And expect the crowd to be very vocal in support of the FMW girls too. Kudo, herself an ex-All Japan Women's girl, is one of the most popular women wrestlers in Japan. FMW crowds always travel in numbers to "away shows" to support their heroes, and are sure to be out in force on this occasion too.

"Banzai Press" tips Chikako Shiratori as the most likely choice, being the "senior" rookie not already on the card. But the final decision rests with AJW.

If Minami's partner is named before we go to print, we will insert it here. But it is very likely that she will be named on the day of the contest.

SUZUKA MINAMI

BORN: 18 Apr 1969
HOMETOWN: Abo, Chiba
HEIGHT: 173 cm/5' 9"
WEIGHT: 65 kg/143 lbs
DEBUTED: 12 Jul 1985
Nagano City, Nagano

GROUPS: 1985- AJW

TITLES HELD: WWWA Tag Team
All-Pacific
Japanese Junior

PAST SPORTS: Swimming

FAVOURITE Power bomb
MOVE/HOLD:

TO BE

ANNOUNCED

"YOUNG STARS" CHALLENGE: ASARI V FUKUOKA

CHAPPARITA ASARI

BORN: 15 Sep 1973
HOMETOWN: Arakawa, Tokyo
HEIGHT: 152 cm/5' 1"
WEIGHT: 55 kg/121 lbs
DEBUTED: 18 Nov 1992
Katsushikaku, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1992- JWP

TITLES HELD: Japanese Junior

PAST SPORTS: Gymnastics

FAVOURITE "Sky-twister" press
MOVE/HOLD:

One of the most exciting matchups of "Wrestling Queendom" will take place when young rookies Chapparita ASARI (AJW) and Hikari Fukuoka (JWP) take to the ring.

The two lightweight aerial artists have both gathered support from fans, due to their acrobatic skills. This bout promises to be full of fast paced action, and high-flying high-risk manoeuvres.

Fukuoka has a handy weight advantage, but matchups between high-flyers often tend to be decided more by who can avoid making the fatal mistake the longer. In terms of ability, this one is very hard to call.

Fukuoka also has an edge on experience too, but not so significant as to make a big difference. It will be a short bout, but one of night's best.

HIKARI FUKUOKA

BORN: 23 Feb 1971
HOMETOWN: Akita City, Akita
HEIGHT: 160 cm/5' 4"
WEIGHT: 65 kg/143 lbs
DEBUTED: 1 Dec 1990
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1989-1992 JWP
1992- JWP

TITLES HELD:

PAST SPORTS: Gymnastics

FAVOURITE Moonsault Press
MOVE/HOLD:

SPECIAL PROFILE:

AKIRA HOKUTO

Of all the women currently active in professional wrestling, Akira Hokuto stands out as the "Uncrowned Queen" of the sport. Her commitment and dedication to her craft has earned her unprecedented respect amongst her peers, and it will be with some sadness that fans at Yokohama Arena greet her for her third-to-last Japanese appearance.

Hokuto, more than any other woman today, typifies the ability to overcome immense obstacles, and still produce the goods. Despite serious injuries throughout her career, she has always delivered, and it seems a cruel twist of fate that may well see her retire without having won the World Title.

She has had her chances, but always, the ultimate prize has eluded her. As a top contender throughout the late 1980s, Champion Nakano was always just one step ahead. Then last year, when perhaps her best form was in evidence, injury intervened, and robbed her of a real chance to dethrone Aja Kong.

The battle against injury has in fact been Hokuto's biggest. Early in her career, it seemed as though she was finished, when a broken neck put her out of action. She fought back however, to new glory as a World Tag Team Champion, and "White Belt" Champion. But she was just never able to gain that final step.

Hokuto's career began back in 1985, wrestling under her real name (Hisako Uno). The youngster's talent was immediately obvious, and she was named All Japan Women's "Rookie of the Year" in that year. Uno continued to build on this early success, and her October 1986 tag team bout (partnered by Yukari Omori) against Chigusa Nagayo and Yumiko Hotta was chosen as AJW's "Match of the Year".

Hokuto's star was in the ascendency, and in April 1987, she teamed with Hotta to win the WWWA World Tag Team

Championship. But then, tragedy struck.

Just twelve days later, while defending the title against Yumi Ogura and Kazue Nagahori, Uno suffered her broken neck. She won accolades for her efforts to fight on despite the injury, but the cause was hopeless. The belts were gone, and so it seemed were hopes of a bright future.

It was Uno's spirit which saw her through though. She made it back into the ring in 1988, changing her name to Akira Hokuto. With it, came fresh luck, as Hokuto and new "Marine Wolves" partner

others can all bear witness to Hokuto's proven skill and determination to succeed.

In 1992, she was again at the top of the rankings. She lifted the All-Pacific Title once more in November of that year, and followed up by winning the 1993 "Japan Grand Prix" tournament, which she completed undefeated. She had won the right to challenge Kong for the World Crown.

But again, it was injury which halted her progress. An accumulation of knee and back injuries forced Hokuto to relinquish her right to a Title challenge. She still fought Kong, but it was a non-title bout, and her condition prevented her from giving her best in the match.

She persisted however, as All Japan Women needed her for their inter-promotional bouts against the other companies. Hokuto wanted to stand down. To rest and recover. But the company was calling, and Hokuto responded.

Come the end of year awards, there was no other choice. Hokuto was unanimous selection as AJW's MVP for 1993. But with it came her decision to retire in 1994.

At first, it was to be at this event, "Wrestling Queendom". However, with the announcement of big shows at Budokan Hall (in August) and the Tokyo Dome (November), Hokuto was persuaded to make three special appearances in Japanese rings this year.

But she is not resting idle between those. Already this year, she has campaigned successfully in Mexico and in Korea. Despite the need for rest, Hokuto cannot. She seems addicted to the ring.

Hokuto's final farewell to her Japanese fans though, draws nearer. The memories she leaves here will remain for a long time to come however. Come November, Tokyo Dome will be the scene of one of the most dramatic moments of the Japanese wrestling year.

AKIRA HOKUTO

BORN: 13 Jul 1967
HOMETOWN: Kitakatsushika
HEIGHT: 170 cm/5' 8"
WEIGHT: 63 kg/139 lbs
DEBUTED: 28 May 1985
Suikaido, Ibaragi

GROUPS: 1985- AJW

TITLES HELD: All-Pacific
WWWA World Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Track, softball

FAVOURITE "Northern Lights"
MOVE HOLD: bomb

Suzuka Minami soon were in the driving seat in the WWWA Tag Team division.

The "Marine Wolves" enjoyed two reigns as World Champions, until their rivalry, although friendly, for the All-Pacific Title saw each concentrate more on their singles careers.

And while Minami's form has seen her slip a little way down the rankings since those days, Hokuto has remained at the top. She has continued to wrestle "Best of the Card" bouts against a variety of opponents. Kyoko Inoue, Manami Toyota, "Bull" Nakano, Aja Kong and

INTRODUCING: THE ALL-PACIFIC TITLE

(THE "WHITE BELT" OF WOMEN'S WRESTLING)

Taking a quick look through the title history for the All-Pacific Title is something akin to reading a "Who's Who" of Japanese women's wrestling over the past fifteen years or so.

Most of the holders of the championship were the leading names of their respective eras. Although not all the legends have held a grasp of this Title.

The All-Pacific Title originally came into being back in the days when Hawaii, and other parts of the Pacific, could also boast strong pro wrestling circuits. The Title was the number two championship for the women of the day, behind the WWWA World Title.

In those days, the Japanese girls had more competition from the foreign girls, and their domination of these Titles was less complete.

The two championships were regarded as something of "sister titles". The World Title was often referred to as the "Red Belt", while the All-Pacific was known as the "White Belt". Many of the girls used their reign as "White Belt" Champion as a stepping stone toward the "Red Belt".

Thus, the history of the All-Pacific Title is riddled with "Champion Vacated" notings. Maki Ueda, Mimi Hagiwara, "Devil" Masami, and Akira Hokuto all vacated the "White Belt" in this fashion, while "Jumbo" Hori vacated to challenge for the WWWA Tag Team Title. This, "secondary" status has not hurt the popularity of the Title, or the respect with which it is still held.

Suzuka Minami's decision not to accept the belt on a technical decision (as opposed to a clean pinfall) in 1990 illustrates that point.

And mention of Minami also reminds that this Title has more than once been a point of contention between members

TITLE HISTORY

DATE	NOTING
31 Aug 1977	Jane O'Brien beat Maki Ueda
1 Sep 1977	Yumi Ikeshita beat Jane O'Brien
1978	Ikeshita vacated due to ankle injury
20 May 1978	Chabera Romero beat Maki Ueda
9 Aug 1978	Maki Ueda beat Chabera Romero (Tokyo)
27 Feb 1979	Ueda vacated to challenge for WWWA World Title
27 Sep 1979	Tomi Aoyama beat Le Lani Kai
1979	Aoyama vacated the title due to injury (knee)
21 Feb 1980	Yumi Ikeshita beat Lucy Kayama
25 Feb 1981	Mimi Hagiwara beat Yumi Ikeshita
29 Aug 1981	Hagiwara vacated to challenge for WWWA World Title
12 Jan 1982	"Jumbo" Hori beat "Wild" Kazuki
15 Jun 1982	Hori vacated to challenge for WWWA Tag Title
5 Oct 1982	Judy Martin beat Yukari Omori
4 Nov 1982	Mimi Hagiwara beat Judy Martin
26 Nov 1983	Hagiwara vacated announcing her retirement
1 Apr 1984	"Devil" Masami beat Judy Martin
Dec 1985	Masami vacated to challenge for WWWA World Title
15 Apr 1986	Chigusa Nagayo beat "Dump" Matsumoto
21 Aug 1986	Le Lani Kai beat Chigusa Nagayo (Tokyo)
27 Apr 1987	Chigusa Nagayo beat Le Lani Kai (Osaka)
6 May 1989	Nagayo vacated announcing her retirement
18 Jun 1989	"Bull" Nakano beat Mitsuko Nishiwaki (Tokyo)
13 Nov 1989	Noriyo Tateno beat "Bull" Nakano (Ashikaga)
30 Apr 1990	Aja Kong beat Noriyo Tateno (Chiba)
17 Jun 1990	Suzuka Minami won the title via a dq decision, but refused to accept it on such condition
7 Oct 1990	Manami Toyota beat "Bison" Kimura (Tokyo)
17 Mar 1991	Suzuka Minami beat Manami Toyota (Tokyo)
29 Apr 1991	Akira Hokuto beat Suzuka Minami (Tokyo)
4 Oct 1991	Suzuka Minami beat Akira Hokuto (Tokyo)
26 Oct 1991	"Bison" Kimura beat Suzuka Minami (Toyama)
5 Jun 1992	Kyoko Inoue beat "Bison" Kimura (Asahikawa)
26 Nov 1992	Akira Hokuto beat Kyoko Inoue (Kawasaki)
25 Aug 1993	Hokuto vacated to challenge for WWWA World Title
28 Nov 1992	Toshiyo Yamada beat Manami Toyota (Osaka)

of a leading tag-team. Minami and "Marine Wolves" partner Akira Hokuto had some intense clashes with the championship at stake.

And back in the early days of the Title, "Queen Angels" Tomi Aoyama and Lucy Kayama both challenged for the "White Belt".

Perhaps, in this context then, it is appropriate that the All-Pacific Title should become the focal point for All Japan Women's "Wrestling Queendom" promotions.

Current Champion Toshiyo

Yamada began her reign at "Wrestling Queendom I", in Osaka last year. At 1994's "Queendom", she faces one of her own former (and still occasional) regular partners, Kyoko Inoue.

Although their bout is not the main event this year (below the "Dream Team" Tag Team bout), it will still be a major focal point of the event. It remains the most prestigious of the titles at stake at "Wrestling Queendom (1994)", and the calibre of the two contestants should ensure one of the best bouts on the card.

BATTLE FOR THE "WHITE BELT"

TOSHIYO YAMADA

BORN: 27 Feb 1970
HOMETOWN: Urawa, Saitama
HEIGHT: 168 cm/5' 7"
WEIGHT: 70 kg/154 lbs
DEBUTED: 27 Jul 1987
Honjo, Saitama

GROUPS: 1987- AJW

TITLES HELD: All-Pacific
WWWA World Tag Team
Japanese Tag Team
Japanese Junior
UWA Women's Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Soccer, tennis

FAVOURITE Spinning leg
MOVE HOLD: lariat

All-Pacific Champion Toshiyo Yamada makes her first "big show" defense of the Title she won at "Wrestling Queendom '93" in Yokohama.

Facing one of her regular tag team partners, Yamada will be keen to retain possession of All Japan Women's "number two" title, and use it as a springboard toward a WWWA World Title challenge later in the year. At present though, she currently has the burden of defending two major titles, as she, along with Manami Toyota, is also WWWA World Tag Team Champion.

Indeed, it is somewhat surprising that Toyota, and not Inoue herself, shares this glory with Yamada. While the Yamada/Toyota duo has certainly been a combination, Yamada and Inoue have been a much more regular combination, over a longer period of time.

Yamada actually joined All Japan Women's one year earlier than Inoue. Like Hokuto though, Yamada missed a year (1990) through neck injury. Thus, this matchup will be one between two girls of very much the same size, and experience.

From the early days of her career, Nagayo was pushed as a future star. It was thought that she looked like the (at the time) recently retired Chigusa Nagayo, and she shared much of Chigusa's athletic ability. Yamada adopted many of Chigusa's techniques, taking on the appearance of something of a martial artist, despite the fact that these do not appear significantly in her sporting background.

Perhaps her soccer training came through for her here though, as Yamada has a particularly brutal kick, capable of knocking the stuffing out of all but the toughest opponent.

Yamada's neck injury sidelined her for most of 1990, but her return to the ring on 7 December of that year, showed that she was determined to get back on top. She took something of a pounding during that match, but certainly showed that she had recovered enough to withstand the rigours of the ring.

Inoue, meanwhile, had been quickly progressing as a member of "Bull" Nakano's "Gokumonto" group. During Nakano's WWWA World Title feud with Aja Kong, it was Inoue who rose to become Nakano's first lieutenant, often teaming with her against Kong and "Bison" Kimura, or "Madusa" Miceli.

At "Wrestle Marinpiad II", while Nakano and Kong waged war inside the cage, it was Inoue who was such a major part of the action outside the cage, as she tried single-handedly to stop Aja's comrades from interfering in the match.

In 1991, Yamada and Inoue were brought together, for a tour of Mexico, to study the lucha libre style. The duo proved a successful team, and returned to Japan with their reputations greatly enhanced.

Success in AJW's 1991 "End of Year Tag Team" tournament, where they upended World Champs Kong and Kimura in the final, did them no harm either. But, unfortunately, they were just unable to make that extra step,

to the top of the ladder.

They pushed Kong and Kimura hard in Title bouts, but just came up short each time.

Inoue was also developing her singles career at this time, so Yamada teamed on occasion with Toyota as well. And it was with Toyota, that in March, 1992, she finally scored the decision over Kong and Kimura. They reigned as World Champions for over a year, before surprisingly dropping the Title, then recovering it, against JWP's "Dynamite" Kansai and Mayumi Ozaki.

But throughout, Yamada has retained her combination with Inoue. Indeed, just six days prior to "Wrestling Queendom", they teamed once more in Korakuen Hall.

There meeting in Yokohama Arena promises to be a classic match. Two friends and rivals battling for the top position, below World Champion. Free from the "personal grudge" limitations which many Western promotional companies try to encourage, this bout should be purely a test of athletic skill, between two equals. A fitting semi-final matchup, for one of All Japan Women's most prestigious cards of 1994.

KYOKO INOUE

BORN: 22 Apr 1969
HOMETOWN: Nanyo, Yamagata
HEIGHT: 166 cm/5' 5"
WEIGHT: 73 kg/161 lbs
DEBUTED: 10 Oct 1988
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1987- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese
IWA
All-Pacific

PAST SPORTS: Judo, track

FAVOURITE Niagara driver
MOVE/HOLD:

SPECIAL PROFILE:

AJA KONG

Aja Kong, present day WWWA World Champion, is the "Current Queen" of the world of women's wrestling. As with Nakano, it has been her toughness, and uncompromising attitude in the ring which has endeared her to the wrestling fans in this part of the world.

And Aja's introduction to the pro ranks in wrestling is also similar to Nakano's. Debuting amidst the heat of the "Dump" V "Bull" feud, a young, Erica Shishedo was soon caught up in it all. As one of "Bull's" apprentices in the "Gokumonto" clan, she quickly climbed up through the ranks, until, in December 1989, after only three years, she teamed with Kumiko "Grizzly" Iwamoto to win the WWWA World Tag Team Titles.

This reign lasted only a few months, but Shishedo had tasted the thrill of victory, and wanted more. As "Bull" herself had done just a few years beforehand, Shishedo stepped out of the shadow of her mentor, and set about creating her own identity.

Well, actually, in many ways, it wasn't quite her own. Shaving most of her hair, and dyeing the rest, Shishedo took over ownership of Matsumoto's old petrol can, and renamed herself Aja Kong. Her appearance, at first, was quite bizarre. Unlike the other girls with All Japan Women's, Kong is of mixed blood; half Japanese, half negro. With her new image, Aja Kong indeed looked frightening enough to scare all but the most stoutest of foes.

The fans quickly reacted to the new "monster" in the women's ranks, and Aja Kong became an instant hit. Teaming regularly with "Bison" Kimura, she established herself as one of the top stars in both the singles and tag team divisions.

But Aja was aiming for the top. She quickly established herself as the number one contender for the WWWA World Title, and went after Nakano with vengeance. They battled

AJA KONG

BORN: 25 Sep 1970
HOMETOWN: Tachikawa, Tokyo
HEIGHT: 165 cm/5' 6"
WEIGHT: 108 kg/237 lbs
DEBUTED: 16 Sep 1986
Matsu City, Aomori

GROUPS: 1986~ AJW

TITLES HELD: WWWA World
WWWA World Tag Team
All-Pacific

PAST SPORTS: Karate

FAVOURITE MOVE/HOLD: Spinning punch

it out not only in the ring, but also in a series of cage matches. Nakano was retaining her Title, but Kong was inching nearer each time.

And finally, after more than two years of trying, Aja Kong dethroned the Champion. In Kawasaki on 26 November, 1992, Aja Kong ended "Bull" Nakano's reign as WWWA World Champion, and began a new era for women's wrestling.

As yet though, Aja's reign as Champion has not yet been set on fire. Though a number of worthy challengers exist, Aja has thus far fended them off quite handily. She

Australian Ringsport Report

Bringing the latest news to fans in the South Pacific

Phone-up and newsletter services operating

Write to:

Roy Spaniel,
P.O.Box 131,
Mordialloc,
Victoria 3195,
Australia.

seems to lack the challenger with the extra drive that Nakano had to face. Repeatedly face.

Kong has met all her challengers so far, head on. But so far, she has not had to face a challenge from all quarters. It seems that she will not have to face a bid from "Wrestling Queendom" rival Akira Hokuto, and her partner at this event, and ex-champion Nakano seems to have little interest in reclaiming the top spot.

But the fourth woman in the ring at Yokohama, may yet pose a different problem.

Kong has not yet had to face LLPW Champion, Shinobu Kandori; perhaps the most dangerous of all the possible contenders. And while Kong seems none-too-worried about any threat to her singles Crown from this quarter, she would do well to stay on the alert.

Kong has stated this year that her main goal is adding the WWWA Tag Team Title to her singles Championship. She has been teaming regularly with two partners in recent months, with a view towards this goal. Both Nakano and Sakie Hasegawa have worked well with Kong in matches to date, but Kong would be foolish to devote all her energies to this goal.

While Kong may seem to have clear possession of the throne, the other claimants will continue to pose a constant threat. And should Kong show any sign of dropping her guard, they will be quick to pounce.

When you are at the top of a ladder, the only direction you can go is down. Aja Kong is currently in the unenviable position of having to avoid that fall.

Kong's Crown may not be on the line on this occasion, but she will need to show that it still rests firmly on her head, to avoid the challenge from a new "pretender".

CLASH OF COMPANIES:

HASEGAWA V KANSAI

SAKIE HASEGAWA

BORN: 17 Jun 1970
HOMETOWN: Kamitoga, Tochigi
HEIGHT: 169 cm/5' 7"
WEIGHT: 68 kg/150 lbs
DEBUTED: 7 Dec 1989
Iwata, Shizuoka

GROUPS: 1989- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese
Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Karate

FAVOURITE Rolling savate
MOVE/HOLD: kick

1994 is proving to be a year of great challenges for All Japan Women's Sakie Hasegawa. Clearly destined for promotion up the ranks in the near future, she is

"Dynamite" Kansai is a rare physical specimen. Built like a Sherman tank, she has easily been able to rise to the top of the JWP ranks, and looks destined to stay there for some time yet.

Kansai, like Shinobu Kandori, was drafted into pro wrestling back in 1986, when Jackie Sato formed Japan Women's Pro Wrestling. And although she stood in the shadow of Kandori's reputation, she was still able to establish a reputation of her own as a tough opponent.

With the collapse of Japan Women's in 1992, Kansai became the star of the new, reformed JWP. And in 1993, together with Mayumi Ozaki, Kansai became the first "Japanese non-AJW" holder of the WWWA Tag Team Championship.

At "Wrestling Queendom", faces an opponent she should be able to beat, but should not under-estimate nevertheless. And as JWP's highest positioned wrestler on this card, Kansai

being matched with a seemingly endless list of top line opponents, designed to test her to the limit.

Her 1993 campaigns, in comparison, are beginning to pale in comparison. Although she spent much of the year as co-holder of the Japanese Tag Team Title, her bouts were mainly mid-card affairs, against similarly ranked opponents.

A strong showing in the "Japan Grand Prix" Tournament however, where she scored a draw against Akira Hokuto, and a win over Toshiyo Yamada, have ear-marked her for bigger

"Global Wrestling News Service"

Monthly news from around the world, and many other goodies as well

Run by one of wrestling's most knowledgeable gurus

Write to:

Mr Tom Burke,
31 Groveland St,
Springfield,
Ma 01108,
U.S.A.

has the added pressure to succeed. Anything less, would not be good for a company looking to stage its own spectacular in little more six weeks time.

And too, the lure of a possible World Title bid at the end of the year in Tokyo Dome must provide an additional motivation. Though unsuccessful in her 1993 attempt to topple Aja Kong, Kansai remains a top contender, worthy of a second chance.

But a loss to Hasegawa would surely hurt any ambitions

and better things. This year, Hasegawa has been a regular main event and semi-final performer, and has impressed consistently in her outings against the likes of Yamada, Manami Toyota and others.

At "Wrestling Queendom", she faces another big test. Matched against JWP Champion "Dynamite" Kansai, Hasegawa will again need a huge effort. She faces size and experience handicaps, as well as Kansai's reputation.

Hasegawa has repeatedly shown though, that she can rise to the big occasion. While clear underdog for this battle once again, a win is not inconceivable, given her determination.

And if such a success does materialise, Hasegawa's rise to the top may just come faster than expected. Whatever her result at "Queendom" though, watch for Hasegawa's star to shine very soon!

Kansai may harbour along those lines. Kansai MUST win at "Wrestling Queendom". Not just for her company's sake, but also her own.

"DYNAMITE" KANSAI

BORN: 4 Dec 1969
HOMETOWN: Kyoto City, Kyoto
HEIGHT: 173 cm/5' 9"
WEIGHT: 80 kg/176 lbs
DEBUTED: 17 Aug 1986
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1986-1992 JWP
1992- JWP

TITLES HELD: JWP
UWA Women's International
Pacific Coast Tag Team
WWWA Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Volleyball

FAVOURITE "Splash Mountain"
MOVE/HOLD:

JAPANESE TAG TITLE

DEFENCE:

LLPW V AJW

KAORU ITO

BORN: 20 Oct 1971
 HOMETOWN: Kyoto City, Kyoto
 HEIGHT: 160 cm/5' 4"
 WEIGHT: 60 kg/132 lbs
 DEBUTED: 8 Oct 1989
 Korakuen Hall, Tokyo
 GROUPS: 1989- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese
 Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Judo
 FAVOURITE: Foot stomp
 MOVE/HOLD:

But then, at "St Final", Yasha Kurenai and Miki Handa gave the company some cause for celebration. They scored a surprise, but welcome, win over Japanese Tag Team champs Kaoru Ito and Sakie Hasegawa.

LLPW had good cause to celebrate, and be proud. Now, perhaps, the company had two more "stars in the making".

But unfortunately, LLPW failed to capitalise on that success. Some four months on, Kurenai and Handa have rarely teamed, much less defended their championship. And now, Ito is back. This time, with Tomoko Watanabe

YASHA KURENAI

BORN: 23 Apr 1970
 HOMETOWN: Fukui City, Obama
 HEIGHT: 161 cm/5' 4"
 WEIGHT: 70 kg/154 lbs
 DEBUTED: 1 Dec 1989
 Korakuen Hall, Tokyo
 GROUPS: 1989-1991 JWP
 1992- LLPW

TITLES HELD: Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Judo, kendo
 FAVOURITE: "Arm bomber"
 MOVE/HOLD:

In December, 1993, LLPW was a young company, struggling to establish itself, and its fighters, amongst the other wrestling companies here in Japan. It was finding the going tough, and the lack of real success (other than that of its star, Shinobu Kandori) of its wrestlers was certainly not helping.

"Wrestling Chatterbox" Newsletter

Monthly news from the American professional wrestling scene!

US\$2:50 (\$4:00 foreign) per issue

Write to:
 "Wrestling Chatterbox",
 23-44 30th Drive,
 Astoria,
 NY 11102-3252,
 U.S.A.

championship staying with LLPW. Handa has still not fully recovered from a hand injury sustained in mid February, and will find it difficult to wrestle at her best at this event. In an otherwise relatively even matchup, that may well prove the deciding factor.

TOMOKO WATANABE

BORN: 23 Feb 1972
 HOMETOWN: Chiba City, Chiba
 HEIGHT: 160 cm/5' 4"
 WEIGHT: 75 kg/165 lbs
 DEBUTED: 8 Oct 1989
 Korakuen Hall, Tokyo
 GROUPS: 1989- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese
 Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Judo, swimming
 FAVOURITE: Judo holds
 MOVE HOLD:

as her partner, Ito wants the Championship she lost at the end of 1993, returned to her, and to All Japan Womens.

Actually, while this bout features four of the younger, and perhaps less established" girls, it offers an interesting matchup of styles. All four girls joined professional wrestling from judo, and it will be interesting to see if this similarity in backgrounds has any impact on the bout.

But realistically, it is hard to see the

MIKI HANDA

BORN: 18 Apr 1971
 HOMETOWN: Taito-ku, Tokyo
 HEIGHT: 160 cm/5' 4"
 WEIGHT: 60 kg/132 lbs
 DEBUTED: 23 Nov 1987
 Korakuen Hall, Tokyo
 GROUPS: 1987-1991 JWP
 1992- LLPW

TITLES HELD: Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Judo
 FAVOURITE: German suplex
 MOVE/HOLD:

JWP TAG TEAM TITLE

JWP V AJW

MAYUMI OZAKI

BORN: 28 Oct 1968
HOMETOWN: Kawaguchi, Saitama
HEIGHT: 155 cm/5' 2"
WEIGHT: 54 kg/119 lbs
DEBUTED: 17 Aug 1986
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1986-1992 JWP
1992- JWP

TITLES HELD: WWWA Tag Team
JWP Tag Team
JWP Junior
UWA Womens Junior

PAST SPORTS: Basketball

FAVOURITE "Tequilla Sunrise"
MOVE/HOLD:

"Wrestling Queendom" will be featuring a special first for All Japan Women's Pro Wrestling. At this event, JWP Tag Team Champions Mayumi Ozaki and "Cutie" Suzuki are putting their company's tag team title on the line.

This will be the first occassion in Japanese wrestling history, that one of the "minor" women's groups

"CUTIE" SUZUKI

BORN: 22 Oct 1969
HOMETOWN: Kawaguchi, Saitama
HEIGHT: 155 cm/5' 2"
WEIGHT: 55 kg/121 lbs
DEBUTED: 19 Sep 1986
Tokushime, Tikushima

GROUPS: 1986-1992 JWP
1992- JWP

TITLES HELD: JWP Junior
JWP Tag Team
UWA Women's Junior

PAST SPORTS: Judo, handball

FAVOURITE Dragon suplex
MOVE HOLD:

has defended one of its own titles, on a show organised by All Japan Women's. And it just may work against JWP on this occassion.

While Suzuki and Ozaki are certainly two of the better Japanese girls, they find themselves up against the team of Mima Shimoda and Etsuko Mita. Not only do the All Japan Women's girls hold a noticeable size advantage, they are one of the more experienced, and established women's tag teams in Japan at this moment.

And they are certainly approaching this match with a determination to win.

At the beginning of March, Mita and Shimoda went on campaign in Korea, along with mentor Akira Hokuto, and her former "Marine Wolves" partner, Suzuka Minami, with the express intention of preparing for this bout.

Mita and Shimoda are obviously keen to ensure that they represent All Japan Women's well, and, in light of this recent tour, can be expected to pull some big surprises at Yokohama Arena.

Suzuki and Ozaki may have a few surprises of their own though. Certainly, they caused a major upset the night they lifted the JWP Tag Team Titles from former champions "Devil" Masami and "Dynamite" Kansai. On that occassion, they faced an even bigger size handicap than they do here.

Suzuki has an extra motivating force behind her to. Her 46 second loss to Chigusa Nagayo in the main event at JWP's March show in Korakuen Hall was a major embarrassment to her. She needs to prove to her fans that this was just a fluke, and not a sign of form loss.

An interesting trivia note to this contest. As can be seen in the statistics provided, Mita and Shimoda made their pro wrestling debuts on the same day. In fact, they wrestled against each other on that occassion.

MIMA SHIMODA

BORN: 23 Dec 1970
HOMETOWN: Meguro, Tokyo
HEIGHT: 166 cm/5' 6"
WEIGHT: 60 kg/132 lbs
DEBUTED: 5 Aug 1987
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1987- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese Junior
Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Amateur wrestling

FAVOURITE "Death Lake" drive
MOVE/HOLD:

Unfortunately, the magazines in those days didn't record all the women's results, so it is not possible for us to report who won on that occassion.

This matchup will be one of the key clashes at the 1994 "Wrestling Queendom". With all four girls looking to prove a point, the match should be a real cracker.

ETSUKO MITA

BORN: 28 May 1969
HOMETOWN: Setagaya, Tokyo
HEIGHT: 173 cm/5' 9"
WEIGHT: 75 kg/165 lbs
DEBUTED: 5 Aug 1987
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1987- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Basketball

FAVOURITE "Death Valley" bomb
MOVE/HOLD:

SPECIAL PROFILE:

SHINOBU KANDORI

Ladies Legend Pro Wrestling Champion Shinobu Kandori is the "Wild Card" in the main event at Yokohama Arena. Her influence on the bout, could well sway the match one way or the other.

Her partner, Akira Hokuto has stated that she regards Kandori as much as rival as either Kong or Nakano. Indeed, their two previous meetings, in singles bouts, have been shared at one win each. Perhaps there is a desire, on either girl's part, to take the rivalry to a deciding third match.

Kandori and Nakano are known rivals, and their feelings towards each other were in clear evidence last year, when LLPW hosted the women from All Japan Women's on 9 November.

Kandori's feelings toward Kong are perhaps less clear. Of the possible contenders to Kong's WWWA World Title, Kandori alone has yet to make a challenge. Has she no interest in the most prestigious of the women's championships? Or is she just biding her time, waiting for the right moment to launch her bid?

Of all the women active on the wrestling scene here in Japan, Kandori has perhaps the most potential to unseat Kong. Her judo background has proved a strong grounding for the development of her skills as a wrestler.

And what a background that was. Once World, and three times Japanese judo Champion, Kandori could not have come into professional wrestling with better qualifications. Indeed, it is surprising that it was not All Japan Women's which scooped her up.

Rather, it was former WWWA World Champion, and AJW rebel Jackie Sato who "discovered" Kandori, and signed her for her new Japan Women's Pro Wrestling company in 1986. Kandori soon was realising her potential, and even before JWP's first card, Kandori had established herself within the company as

Sato's main challenger.

And so it was that first match as a professional wrestler, was also the main event at JWP's debut card. On that occasion, and one later one, Sato was able to fend off the threat. But with a tour to Mexico, and more experience, Kandori got past Sato on her third attempt.

Kandori has remained the top girl for the smaller companies since that time. In 1992, when JWP folded, she was behind the formation of Ladies Legend Pro Wrestling. And when they held their

crossed swords with most of the All Japan women. And Kandori has always more than held her own.

In Yokohama, she will be in front of her "home crowd". This event, may well provide the spur she needs to decide to chase Aja Kong and the World Title. It would most certainly be a surprise to see her turn down an opportunity to go after the supreme prize.

And if Kandori were to succeed, it would be a tremendous boost for her company. Small in size, and struggling to establish itself in a highly competitive market, LLPW could do a lot worse than possess the current reigning World Champion.

Already, Kandori has benefitted personally from the inter-promotional series, which now is well into its second year. She has become exposed to a far greater number of fans than otherwise would have been possible for her, and her successes have helped boost her reputation, both among fans, and the other girl wrestlers as well.

She is well and truly accepted as one of the most talented professionals on the Japanese circuit. Her label, along with that of Hokuto for this bout, of "Dangerous Queen" is an appropriate one.

While she may lack the physical size of either Kong or Nakano, her knowledge of the grappling game makes her a most dangerous opponent indeed. If she is on her game at this event, then Akira Hokuto may well have found the one partner who can give her the win over the Nakano/Kong duo.

"Wrestling Queendom" may well prove to be the most important event of Shinobu Kandori's career. A win over the established duo will almost certainly propel her toward the World Title shot, should she desire it.

And with Tokyo Dome beckoning, now would be the ideal time for her to launch her assault.

SHINOBU KANDORI

BORN: 3 Nov 1964
HOMETOWN: Kanagawa, Yokohama
HEIGHT: 170 cm/5' 8"
WEIGHT: 72 kg/158 lbs
DEBUTED: 17 Aug 1986
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1986-1992 JWP
1992- LLPW

TITLES HELD: LLPW
UWA Women's International
Pacific Coast Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Judo

FAVOURITE MOVE/HOLD: Tiger Driver

tournament to crown their own company's champion, it was Kandori who emerged victorious.

1993 also provided Kandori with a new opportunity. At last, she had the opportunity to face the girls from All Japan Women's. Her "Dream Slam" bout with Hokuto, though she lost, proved that she was indeed competitive with the top stars of the larger company. And her subsequent win at "St Final", to level the score between the two underlined that fact.

Along the way, she has

IWA TITLE DEFENCE

TOYOTA V "PLUM"

MANAMI TOYOTA

BORN: 2 Mar 1971
HOMETOWN: Shimane, Matsuda
HEIGHT: 168 cm/5' 7"
WEIGHT: 65 kg/143 lbs
DEBUTED: 5 Aug 1987
Katsushikaku, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1987- AJW

TITLES HELD: WWWA Tag Team
All-Pacific
Japanese
UWA Women's Tag Team
IWA

PAST SPORTS: Swimming

FAVOURITE "Japanese ocean"
MOVE HOLD: suplex

If reputations alone were what decided wrestling bouts, then Manami Toyota would be a certainty for this one.

But they don't, and JWP's "Plum" Mariko is one who can just pull off the upset on the day. And her form, going into this bout is good.

It is only a matter of a

few weeks since Mariko's big battle with "Comeback Queen" Chigusa Nagayo in Korakuen Hall. And she came within a whisker of walking away with the decision on that occasion.

Mariko will have been working hard on her game plan since then. This is one of the bigger matches of her career, and she will be looking to make it count.

Toyota is known for her great technical skill, and this should make for an interesting duel. Mariko has the martial arts background, both sambo wrestling and kendo, to put up a "Match of the Year" class scientific bout.

But Mariko can also look after herself in a brawling situation too, and this versatility might just give her a slight edge. If she can take the match to Toyota early, as she did with Nagayo, and keep the initiative on her side, she may just sneak past her more "prestigious" opponent.

One thing is for sure. Mariko will not go into the bout phased by Toyota's reputation. She will be out to prove herself against a top ranked opponent.

Toyota will not be "ripe for the picking" by any means. In fact, she will probably prove to be a much tougher prospect than the returning "Crush Gal".

But this is the "dark horse" match of the card, with the potential to become a real sizzler, if both girls turn it on.

"PLUM" MARIKO

BORN: 1 Oct 1967
HOMETOWN: Ota-ku, Tokyo
HEIGHT: 158 cm/5' 3"
WEIGHT: 56 kg/123 lbs
DEBUTED: 17 Aug 1986
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1986-1992 JWP
1992- JWP

TITLES HELD: JWP Junior
UWA Junior

PAST SPORTS: Sambo wrestling

FAVOURITE Victory whip
MOVE/HOLD:

Special Events

CONNECTIONS

PHOTOS • FEATURES • PROFILES
CLASSIC-STYLE MAT ACTION FROM THE PAST

Subscribe today and receive 4 issues of "Connections," beginning in March, '94.

YES! Sign me up! Enclosed is \$20 for four great issues of "Connections!"

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Make checks payable to: Special Events • PO Box 453 • Wilkesboro, NC 28697

Your support is appreciated – great wrestling news for you and your *Connection* to the best of all-girl pro wrestling!

EAST MEETS WEST:

BENNETT & SAWAI V AJW

REGGIE BENNETT

BORN:
HOMETOWN:
HEIGHT:
WEIGHT:
DEBUTED:

GROUPS:

TITLES HELD:

PAST SPORTS:

FAVOURITE
MOVE/HOLD:

American Reggie Bennett makes a return to the "Land of the Rising Sun" for "Wrestling Queendom", as the lone foreign star.

Bennett is no stranger to Japanese rings. Some four years ago, she toured here with Japan Women's Pro Wrestling, while last year, she was back, literally bigger than ever, on a short, but

"EAGLE" SAWAI

BORN: 16 Dec 1967
HOMETOWN: Tokyo
HEIGHT: 170 cm/5' 8"
WEIGHT: 100 kg/220 lbs
DEBUTED: 5 Sep 1986
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1986- AJW

TITLES HELD: Pacific Coast Tag
UWA Women's International

PAST SPORTS: Softball

FAVOURITE "Thunder Fire"
MOVE/HOLD: power bomb

successful tour for All Japan Womens.

On that occasion, she partnered "Bull" Nakano, and locked up against Yumiko Hotta and Suzuka Minami (and won) at "Wrestle Marinepiad V", in Tokyo Bay NK Hall.

This time, her team-mate is LLPW's "Eagle" Sawai, and they take on Hotta and Takako Inoue. Though Hotta and Inoue are the current UWA Women's Tag Team Champions, this title will not be at stake on this occasion.

Bennett has proven very popular with the Japanese fans

Wrestling Bookings (Agency)

For assistance with bookings for shows, send relevant details

DISTRIBUTOR FOR "BANZAI PRESS"

Write to:
Phyllis Lee,
P.O.Box 148,
West Unity,
Ohio 43570,
U.S.A.

on past visits here, and in teaming with Sawai, she will be a part of a very formidable team. As two of the biggest girls on the entire card, they will be very difficult to stop.

Hotta herself is not exactly tiny either, but Inoue, by comparison, is likely to find the going tough. She and Hotta will have to use quick tags, and keep the match at a fast-pace, to be able to score a win on this occasion.

The All Japan girls do have one clear advantage - they have teamed more regularly, and

YUMIKO HOTTA

BORN: 10 Jan 1967
HOMETOWN: Kobe, Hyogo
HEIGHT: 168 cm/5' 7"
WEIGHT: 75 kg/165 lbs
DEBUTED: 5 Jun 1985
Tomakomae, Hokaido

GROUPS: 1985- AJW

TITLES HELD: WWWA Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Karate

FAVOURITE Pyramid driver
MOVE HOLD:

more recently, than their opponents. This too, should aid them in a faster paced bout, where hopefully, they will be better able to force a vital mistake from the "scratch-built" combo.

And Hotta and Inoue do have the ability to force just that. This will not be an easy match for either team.

TAKAKO INOUE

BORN: 7 Nov 1969
HOMETOWN: Torede, Ibaragi
HEIGHT: 163 cm/5' 5"
WEIGHT: 65 kg/143 lbs
DEBUTED: 10 Oct 1988
Korakuen Hall, Tokyo

GROUPS: 1988- AJW

TITLES HELD: Japanese
Japanese Tag Team
UWA Women's Tag Team

PAST SPORTS: Amateur wrestling

FAVOURITE Flying enzuji
MOVE/HOLD:

"WRESTLING QUEENDOM" PREDICTIONS

1. Japanese Junior Title defence.
"Candy" Okutsu to beat Rie Tamada, and retain the Title.
2. Japanese Tag Team Title defence.
Kaoru Ito and Tomoko Watanabe to beat defending champions
Yasha Kurenai and Miki Handa, and take the Championship
back to All Japan Womens.
3. Hikari Fukuoka to beat Chapparita ASARI.
4. Megumi Kudo and "Nurse" Nakamura to beat Suzuka Minami
and "To Be Announced".
5. IWA Title defence.
Manami Toyota to beat "Plum" Mariko.
6. Reggie Bennett and "Eagle" Sawai to beat Yumiko Hotta
and Takako Inoue.
7. JWP Tag Team Title defence.
Etsuko Mita and Mima Shimoda to beat Mayumi Ozaki and
"Cutie" Suzuki, and take the Championship to All Japan
Womens (but defend it at Ariake Colliseum).
8. "Dynamite" Kansai to beat Sakie Hasegawa.
9. All-Pacific Title defence.
Toshiyo Yamada to beat Kyoko Inoue and retain the Title.
10. "Dream Team" Tag Team Match.
Shinobu Kandori and Akira Hokuto to upset Aja Kong and
"Bull" Nakano.

Best Match: Yamada V Inoue
 Best Individual: Sakie Hasegawa
 Most Popular: Akira Hokuto
 Longest Match: Yamada V Inoue (at least 30 mins)
 Shortest Match: Fukuoka V ASARI (less than 7 mins)

Wrestling Boxing Correspondant One of the world's most knowledgeable pro wrestling historians DISTRIBUTOR FOR "BANZAI PRESS" Write to: Dave Cameron, 34c Salisbury Rd, Birkdale, Auckland 10, New Zealand	"Wrestling Observer" Newsletter Weekly news from the world of professional wrestling US\$6:00 (\$9:00 foreign) per four-issue set. Write to: "Wrestling Observer", P.O.Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228, U.S.A.	"Mat Marketplace" Newsletter/catalogue Bi-monthly summary of pro wrestling merchandise and news from all round the world US\$2:50 per issue Write to: "Mat Marketplace", P.O.Box 2371, Jamaica Plains, Ma 02130, U.S.A.
--	--	---

PURE-HEART
PURE-WRESTLING
JWP
COUNT DOWN TO ARIAKE

22 MAY 1994

**SUPER MAJOR
QUEENS**
**有明
FLASH!!**

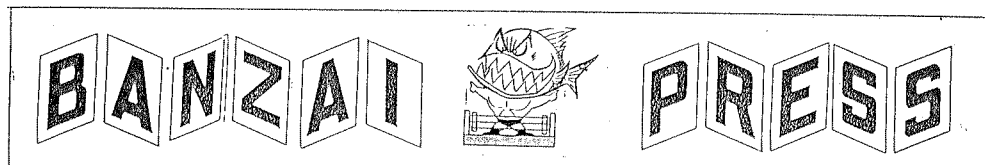
"DYNAMITE" KANSAI V CHIGUSA NAGAYO

"BULL" NAKANO/"DEVIL" MASAMI V SAKIE HASEGAWA/HIKARI FUKUOKA

BOLSHOI KID V COMMANDO BOLSHOI

"CUTIE" SUZUKI V TAKAKO INOUE

AND MORE...



A SPECIAL EDITION will be produced for this event.
Watch out for further details!!!